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MANCHESTER NEW COLLEGE, OXFORD.

CLOSE OF THE SESSION, JUNE, 1890.

ADDRESS TO THE STUDENTS

BY

REV. H. W. CROSSKEY, LL.D., F.G.S.

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At the Close of the Session, June, 1890,

By Rev. H. W. CROSSKEY, LL.D., F.G.S.

ON an occasion so marked and important as this, the close of the first Session of Manchester New College in its new home, I can not begin the address it is my official duty to deliver without wishing you, the members and present and future ministers of the Free Churches of England here assembled, to join with me in humbly thanking the great God who is ever broadening the minds and enlarging the hearts of men, that it has become possible for us—nonconformists of Nonconformists as we are in the rejection of every demand for subscription to human articles of faith—to establish at Oxford our College for students for the Christian Ministry.

Let us thank God that in this ancient University, the spirit which regarded Nonconformists almost as spiritual lepers, with whom it was dangerous to come into contact, is rapidly giving place to the spirit which welcomes all comers, whether from the north or the south, the east or the west, and freely offers to all who are athirst of the fountains of the waters of its life.

In times past, we have had a hard fate. As "Dissenters," we were roundly condemned as essentially narrow minded if not very ignorant "Sectarians," to whom even the conduct of

ordinary public affairs could not be safely entrusted, and whose "conventicles" were worthy of little attention on the part of the cultivated and dominant classes of society; and yet the National Seats of Learning were closed against our entrance. The truer the charges that were made could be shown to be, surely the more unjust was an exclusion which rendered it hard for us to remove our alleged defects. We were treated as men who lacked the bread of life, while we were refused admission to the Colleges wherein it was asserted that bread could be obtained.

Our forefathers did their utmost, in their "Academies," to take away any justification for the reproaches cast upon them. That their efforts were not entirely unsuccessful the actual establishment of Nonconformity as a spiritual as well as a civil power in England, by the sheer force of their scholarship, their piety, and their self-sacrificing toil, abundantly proves.

The breadth of thought and liberality of spirit which characterized even a "Dissenting" Academy is curiously illustrated by Dr. Priestley's account of the one established at Daventry, by Dr. Doddridge, in which he was himself a student. The students—Dr. Priestley tells us—were almost equally divided "upon every question of much importance," and "all the articles of theological orthodoxy and heresy;" and, in consequence of this, all these topics were the subject of continual discussion. The tutors also were of different opinions, Dr. Ashworth taking the orthodox side of every question, and Mr. Clark, the sub-tutor, that of heresy, "though always with the greatest modesty."

Although Dr. Priestley characteristically adds, "in this situation I saw reason to embrace what is generally called the heterodox side of almost every question,"—it is clear that the "heterodox side" was not espoused through intolerant ignorance of all that could be urged against it, or through any obligation being laid upon the student to journey round and round like a mill-horse, over one small circle of well-trodden opinions.

We do but guard the trust handed down from our fathers,

> The truth that made them free,
> The scorn of falsehood's plea,
> Their cherished purity,
> Their garner'd dust,

in welcoming the day when larger opportunities of escaping from sectional and sectarian influences and prejudices, are opened to us.

The spirit of the Lord God of our fathers is with us, as we rejoice in the privileges accorded to those who would freely seek His truth, without signing any pledge as to the nature of the conclusions at which, in the untrammelled course of their studies, they may arrive.

Our students can now come into contact with some of the greatest scholars of the world. They can learn the principles underlying forms of Christianity to which they may not adhere, from those who believe in them and whose lives are sanctified by them, and thus be delivered from the temptation to caricature what they *may* feel called upon to oppose.

Here, within the precincts of this great University, every intellectual and spiritual interest of our age is alive—keenly, eagerly, intensely, passionately alive; here, if anywhere, may be heard the voice of

> "the prophetic soul
> Of the wide world dreaming on things to come."

Here, therefore, is a training ground of training grounds for the large mindedness and large heartedness which, in this College, are esteemed as of far more worth than any particular opinions which may be adopted by its students.

The special task I have to discharge to-day is to address you, gentlemen, who are students preparing for the Christian Ministry; and yet I feel, notwithstanding long years of active work in the

calling to which you are devoting yourselves, my own need of guidance to be so great that it is only with a certain fear and trembling that I can attempt to give directions to others.

The subjects upon which a Minister of Religion is bound to speak are so vast, so awful, and so majestic; the human heart which he has—if he can—to touch, is swayed by such various, subtile, contending, and mighty passions; the world to which he has to bear tidings of the Kingdom of God, is such a fearful battle-field, covered with thousands and tens of thousands of the wounded and the dying; that one of the chief results of experience is to break down utterly any feeling of self-satisfaction.

I can not stand before you and say, "I have done the work that will be yours, and can show you how to prepare yourselves to do it."

The fact, however, that I can still range myself by your sides as nothing but a student, seeking to know more, examining all methods of action, and having a yet unrealized ideal, may possibly prove a tie of sympathy stronger than any a dogmatic moralist, laying down rules and pronouncing opinions ex cathedrâ, could command.

It is primarily necessary that you should form a clear conception of the coming work of your lives, in order that the general course of your studies may receive its right direction, and the spirit in which your studies themselves must be pursued if they are to fulfil their purpose, may be duly cherished.

Unless this be done, you will be tempted by the pleasant pleadings of personal tastes to neglect lines of research which it is essential should be carefully followed, and may even become the slaves of those strong impulses of the passing hour which, in a young man's life, are often as changeable as our English weather itself.

You have doubtless entered yourselves as students for the ministry in a spirit of high and generous enthusiasm. You have felt so overpoweringly the realities of the world invisible,

that you can not free yourselves from their dominant influence. You are so intensely afflicted by the horrible miseries brought by sin into this fair world, and so charmed by the beauty and blessedness of a Christian life, that you are willing to give up the chances of obtaining wealth and honor that human souls may be won to purity and peace. The vision and the dream of a glory to come, alike in earth and heaven, so abides within you, that you can not but strive to hasten the day when "there shall be no more curse."

But great and noble purposes have, in your case, to be connected with the demands of a special vocation. How is this to be done? What kind of work do you propose to undertake? These questions have to be answered, if these days of study are to prepare you for the activities of your lives.

Do not for one moment imagine that through no other occupation than that of the ministry can the same great and divine work, as that you propose to undertake, be accomplished.

The Christian Ministry is sometimes described as a "sacred calling," in terms so special and peculiar as to lead men to imagine that no other calling is as sacred, and that those who enter upon it have opportunities of doing God's work superior to those possessed by men who have to fight the battle of life in the world of business and politics, or in the realms of literature, art, and science.

Every honest profession in the world may be a "sacred calling" to the man who has the soul to make it so; a "vocation" through which sin may be mastered, holiness won, and the coming of God's Kingdom hastened.

If Ministers of Religion have often to sacrifice many worldly advantages, and to deny themselves the gratification of even innocent ambitions, so have all men who would lead lives worth living.

What I would impress upon you, therefore, is that you must not rely upon your "calling" as placing you in any position as

"superior persons" to the ordinary race of mortals, but that you must diligently inquire into the precise nature of the special work you will have to do, that you may learn how to do it well.

I have known men who have become ministers because their imaginations have been set on fire by the notion that it must be, of absolute necessity, a "sacred" thing to read prayers in a church and preach a sermon, and they have not been as mighty witnesses of God as they might have been had they exercised some ordinary craft, the practical requirements of which they more thoroughly understood.

The question I have asked for the sake of discovering some connecting links between your college life and your life to come in the world—viz., what kind of work do you propose to undertake?—is, you will notice, a personal one.

You have again and again been told, by every one in authority in this College, that theological knowledge is here freely imparted without any insistance on the adoption of particular theological doctrines.

This statement is made without the slightest reserve or limitation, and may be accepted as literally and absolutely true. By studying here you do not place yourselves under any obligation to become ministers of Unitarian, Free Christian, Presbyterian, or any other churches.

At the close of your college careers you may dispose of your lives as you will, without being in the slightest danger of incurring the charge of breaking faith with any sect whatever.

Should you deem it right to join, *e.g.*, either the Established Church of England, or any body of orthodox Nonconformists, the supporters of this College would be false to their principles did they utter directly, or indirectly, one word of reproach.

Our hope is, that the education you receive here may enable you to adorn the ministry of any church to which you may attach yourselves, by your wide and gracious charity and your

reverent devoutness, as well as by your learning. In the fulfilment of that hope, we should be abundantly content.

As a matter of fact, however, most, if not all of you, have at present the intention of labouring among the small group of Churches which accept the principle upon which this College is based, and make no demand either upon their ministers or members for subscription to any confession of faith.

The practical subject, therefore, with which we stand directly face to face is, the relation between your College life of preparation, and the work done in connection with the free or non-subscribing Churches of this country.

You are being trained in this College to become free teachers of Theology—that is, teachers of Theology who shall be as untrammelled in the pulpit as professors of classics, history, natural science, law, are in their University chairs.

I can well believe, however, that some among you may be somewhat restless under the severe theological course of study which you are unquestionably called upon to follow, and may be disposed to ask, "Of what use is it likely to prove? Are not human souls ever wearied and made sick, almost nigh unto death, by these endless and intricate critical discussions?"

The more especially is this likely to be the case since it is a patent fact that a great scorn of Theology has grown up not only among the Churches in which you will probably be called upon to minister, but also among very influential circles of literary and scientific men.

That there is some justification for this scorn I can not deny. Theology has been confounded with religion, in heedlessness of the fact that men may adopt the most antagonistic theological systems, and reverence the awful Righteousness of the same God.

Theological opinions have been used as weights in the balance in which men's characters have been placed for judgment, and the most terrible injustice has thus been inflicted upon hundreds of the best and gentlest.

The Bible has been robbed alike of its poetry and its power by Commentators, who have treated it as the critic who declared that the passage—

Sermons in stones, books in the running brooks,

must be corrupt, since sermons are in books and stones in brooks, and that it ought to read sermons in books and stones in the running brooks.

What, however, is Theology? It is the study of the relationships actually existing between man and his Maker, involving an examination alike of the nature of the Power in whom we live and move and have our being, and the nature of the life bestowed upon us. Not to attempt to make a scientific statement of these relationships, and all that they involve, is to treat the pursuit of truth as a worthless task. I am a believer of believers in the pursuit of truth—I care not about what—about anything and everything—about the tiniest creature the microscope reveals, or the angels and archangels surrounding the Eternal Throne.

More than this; when, moved by the deepest instincts of their souls, men worship God, they most emphatically need protection against being carried away by their impulses through the destruction of their intelligence. Religion is, as all history shows, a supreme passion of our being; and all history also shows how by its intensity men have been blinded to the absurdity of the most utter absurdities, and have been moved to treat each other with the most ferocious cruelty. The very strength of the feeling which moves me to bow down in prayer, warns me not to neglect my power of thought.

It is not the fact that any true emotion is lessened by the strictest severity of scientific investigation. On the contrary, it will be deepened just in proportion as our search after the simple truth, and nothing else, is emphatic and complete.

Take, *e.g.*, the love of nature. The light of science is some-

times spoken of as dry and cold. It is not so. The man who traces the strange and mystic history of the formation of mountains, and almost feels the very earth creep and bend beneath his feet as he stands upon their apparently firm summits—who hears the echoes of rolling tides as he walks among the green fields—who, in the quiet stream flowing through a sweet valley so gently that the broad leaves of the water lilies float unshaken on its surface, finds a witness of a power which has treated the solid rocks as the whirlwind the dust, and resistlessly worn them down and carried them far away to the great sea, learns to love every scene he visits, however bleak and desolate, with a passion of admiration, which, in "the green and salad days" of his ignorance, he never felt.

Over the nightly watcher of the stars, who sees through his telescope, in some small dim film of misty light, evidence of the existence of more worlds than are visible on the clearest evening to the naked eye—and who has mastered at least a few of the laws by which order is established and preserved in a boundless universe—the heavens bend with a larger and not a lessened majesty because of the knowledge he has won.

What beauty has the mollusc, crawling in a pool left by the retiring sea, to one who picks it up for the sake of its elegantly-shaped shell, compared with what it has to the naturalist, who understands how it has become what it is, through a thousand changes from form to form.

The idea that clearness of theological thought necessarily dulls and deadens religious emotions is as baseless as the idea that the more we know of Nature, the less will its loveliness charm, and its marvellous majesty compel us to bow down in adoring awe.

One other consideration I must note, as of vast importance in the present age.

If a scientific Theology can not be reconciled with deep religious feeling, religion can not remain a living power among men.

It is of no use to disguise the fact that whatever can be established as true will, in the long run, put an end to the sentiments opposed to it.

Human feelings are, without question, very, very strong, and can always be appealed to on behalf of popular opinions with tremendous effect. But the cold day-light, as some call it, or as I maintain, the warm and glowing sunshine of scientific truth, will at last so strike upon them as to wither them away. Let the notion be spread abroad that religion can not become a subject for accurate thought, with the inevitably resulting death of the sentiments entwined with it, will come the decadence of all faith.

I entreat you young men, therefore, by all the belief in religion that abides within your hearts, to prepare yourselves diligently TO TEACH MEN TO THINK ABOUT IT.

One or two cautions I think it needful to give.

One of the most striking characteristics, I am informed, of Oxford schemes of study is their extreme specialization. Now, I am very strongly convinced that it is well for every minister of religion to have some special study. Not only will the thorough investigation of one subject prove an intellectual discipline of life-long worth, but amid the distractions of public life, unless a man has a pursuit upon which he can concentrate his attention during the spare hours which irregularly and sparsely come and quickly go, he will be in danger of ceasing to be a student altogether, greatly to the detriment of the freshness and strength of mind needed for the discharge of the ordinary duties of his calling. At the same time, I am equally convinced that you will not adequately train yourselves for the ministry, if you narrow the generous breadth of your appointed course of study for the sake of any specialization acceptable to your personal tastes.

Not only is it becoming more and more true that no single science can be isolated for an entirely distinctive treatment, and

that a liberal culture is needed for the sake of a special pursuit itself—but Theology is emphatically the all-embracing science—for is not the Eternal God the sustainer of all that is in Heaven and Earth, and the fountain of all being?

No physical law, no historical event, no emotion of the human heart, is foreign to it. Nature and Humanity are its text books. Whoever would teach Theology, therefore, must pursue his researches in every possible direction; he, of all men, must be, to as large an extent as is intellectually healthful, an "all round" student.

In a University city like Oxford, a marked distinction is drawn between Town and Gown—between those engaged in intellectual pursuits and those carrying on the ordinary businesses of the world.

It is extremely easy for you to imagine—or rather for the feeling unconsciously to be aroused within you—that you belong to a high intellectual and those around you to a lower and more mechanical caste of human beings.

Be on your guard against this. Even as theological students you have to deal with that human nature which is not the profession of a few scholars, and those divine relationships of which University men hold no monopoly. So far, therefore, as the very problems you have to master are not known to be problems of our common humanity, they can neither be stated, understood, or solved.

Should you, students for the ministry, ever feel that you do not belong to the crowd, to the town as well as to the gown, you may be sure that there is something wrong with the spirit in which you are cultivating your intellects themselves.

When you go into the world, to you there must be neither learned or unlearned, but men and women needing the light of truths which they can grasp by virtue of their manhood and their womanhood; and by which they can be led to the green pastures and the still waters.

The teaching of Theology, upon which I have been dwelling, is, however, but the least important part of the work for which you are now preparing. As ministers of religion, your duty will be so to live and toil as to arouse, sustain, and deepen within the souls of men the conviction that they are in the hands of a living God.

Should you enter the service of the Free Churches of England, you will have before you a task of a special and peculiar character, and one that will try your utmost strength.

As a matter of fact, almost all the dogmas around which Christian piety has entwined itself for support for centuries, have passed away from the faith of a very large proportion of the members of those churches.

It was formerly universally believed in those churches that, to ascertain the truth of God, all that had to be done was to interpret the Bible correctly. It was said, "Show us a doctrine plainly taught in the Bible and we will receive it with implicit faith." Our students were shown how this difficult text and that could be rationally "explained,"—and explained away it was with wonderful subtilty. As the differences in the moral and spiritual worth of the books of the Old Testament were perceived, appeal was made to the New Testament as furnishing a firm basis for belief alike in its narratives and its teachings. The Epistles of Paul, with all their intricate subtilties of thought and passion, were resolved almost into a series of the most common-place of Unitarian sermons. Even at so recent a period as when I was a young man, the miracles were regarded as proving the authority of Christ by all the ministers of my acquaintance save, I think, three or four, and every word ascribed to Christ in the four Gospels was not only supposed to be accurately recorded, but to constitute an unquestionable revelation of divine truth.

Now, the greatest religious teacher, not only of our own day and generation, but of many days and generations—Dr.

Martineau—examines the very acts and words ascribed to Jesus for the purpose of discovering which are and which are not out of character with his spirit; feels himself compelled to treat as unauthentic, in its present form, every reported or implied claim of Jesus to be the promised Messiah; dismisses one of the parables from the life of Jesus as very "objectionable;" finds in the strange juxtaposition in the same discourse, and even in the same precepts of Jesus "of ideal elevation and low self-interest," a juxtaposition psychologically impossible, and therefore ethically libellous; and discerns the real Christ in a few ineffaceable lineaments which could only belong to a figure unique in grace and majesty.

For the seat of authority in religion, we are thus flung back upon the soul of man.

Now I do not for one moment say that you will be under any obligation whatsoever to take either the heretical or the orthodox side of any critical question. What I do say is, that you will have to show—as I believe, in my heart of hearts, it can be shown—that Religion can not only coldly exist, but exert its tenderest and noblest influence, when every traditional basis on which it has hitherto been established has been overthrown, and that religious lives can be led alike by those who reject and those who receive the dogmas commonly current in Christendom. Whatever else may be done, this must not be left undone.

I know the frequency with which the objection is made that what is termed "rationalism" is utterly unable to satisfy the deepest cravings of the human soul, and brings with it spiritual desolation. My reply is, that this is not the fact.

Among the devoutest of men may be found those sceptical of all popular creeds. When appeal is made to Luther, Bunyan, Wesley, I appeal to Theodore Parker, Channing, and Martineau.

I frankly confess, however, that our Free Christian Churches have not yet exerted, or even understood, the full strength of their spiritual power. One chief reason has been that,

having to fight for dear life itself, the logical defence of their principles has occupied them too exclusively; and their energies have been more abundantly lavished upon the propagation of liberal theological opinions than upon the winning of souls to God.

I charge you students, to whom the future belongs, to take heed that this shall no longer be the case. Do not look upon "Liberal Christianity" merely as a collection of doctrines, more or less heretical, but as a religion by which this passion-tossed world may be redeemed from its sins and the kingdom of God established.

Be prepared to teach men the latest results of Biblical criticism; to acquaint them with the laws under which the development of religious ideas has taken place; to open their minds to the vastness of the intellectual problems hidden within this God-given life; but do not imagine that to do this will suffice for the healing of the broken-hearted, the deliverance of the captives, the giving of sight to the blind, the setting at liberty them that are bruised.

It is because so many critical discussions, which have nothing to do with our heavenly aspirations, our sorrow for our transgressions, or the blessedness of our obedience to divine laws, have flung such a darkening mist over religion, that the experience of many theologically-wearied souls coincides with that of the noble woman who declares, that it was "at poetry's divine first finger touch" her soul

> "Let go conventions and sprang up surprised,
> Convicted of the great eternities
> Before two worlds;"

and that for her the poets are the only truth-tellers now left to God,

> "The only speakers of essential truth
> Opposed to relative, comparative,

And temporal truths ; the only holders by
His sun-skirts, through conventional gray glooms ;
The only teachers who instruct mankind
From just a shadow on a charnel wall,
To find man's veritable stature out,
Erect, sublime—the measure of a man,
And that's the measure of an angel, says
The Apostle."

Carefully consider, therefore, in these your college days, what this supreme religious—as distinguished from critical and theological—work that will be required of you actually is.

As you do this, you will feel how much you have to accomplish for yourselves, and how little, in comparison, the wisest advisers can do for you.

Among the essential demands of the religious work to be done, are the deepening of reverence, the awakening of penitence, the sustaining a divine ideal of character, the comforting and strengthening human souls with the glad tidings of an Immortal Love.

Who that is not reverent can teach reverence ? Who that has not sorrowed for his own transgressions can touch another's soul ? Who that does not press forward to his own high calling can urge others onward ? Who that does not feel around him the sustaining arm of a Heavenly Father's love, can bring peace to a mourner's heart ?

One suggestion I may make in passing. One of the greatest deficiencies, to my mind, in all churches, from the most heretical to the most orthodox, is the want of an ideal of life which is fitted for men and women in this 19th century.

The ideal presented has almost always archaic characteristics which render it more or less unfit for modern application.

Assuredly, no nobler demand can be made than that we should live in the spirit of Christ ; but Christ did not interfere with public affairs ; no duties were entailed upon men in his

day by the existence of representative institutions; our complicated industrial organisation was not established.

A medieval type of life is that which is generally pictured as the most saintly; and, even in liberal Christian Churches, expressions concerning the world and its pleasures and its interests, are frequently used in harmony with it.

The impression made by the *Imitatio Christi* upon a man as human to his heart's core as Thackeray was, will illustrate what I mean—"The scheme of this book carried out would make (he writes in his Letters) the world the most wretched, useless, dreary, doting place of sojourn; there would be no manhood, no love, no tender ties of mother and child, no use of intellect, no trade or science; a set of selfish beings crawling about, avoiding one another, and howling perpetual miserere."*

Chapters from the Bible are read in all our churches which can not but confuse the moral judgment of a large number of those who think about them at all. I was greatly struck by the following passage in the records of the life of an accomplished lady:—

"I am just come from Church, where the Psalms of the day made me sick. How can one utter, without shuddering, such sentences as 'Let them be confounded and put to shame them that seek after my soul. . . . Let their way be dark and slippery, and let the angel of the Lord persecute them.' Is it not dreadful to think that one must say, as I did, 'God forbid,' while my eye rested on the terrible words contained in the appointed Psalm of the day; or utter in God's holy house that to which one attaches no signification; or, worst of all, connect in any way such sentiments with one's feelings and repeat, with lips that confess Christ, curses for which his blessed command has substituted blessings.

"We were speaking on this subject at Milman's, the other evening, and when I asked Mrs. Milman if she joined in the repetition of such passages; she answered, with much simplicity, like a good woman and

* "The Letters of Thackeray," p. 96.

faithful clergywoman as she is, 'Oh, yes! but then you know one never means what one says;' which, in spite of our company consisting chiefly of 'witty churchmen,' elicited from it a universal burst of laughter."*

May I venture to ask you young men, while you are in training for the ministry, to think out the question, What is the highest ideal for a modern life in the England of to-day?—an ideal for men and women, whether rich or poor, who have the social and political duties, together with the artistic and scientific tastes of our age, follow the usual avocations of an industrial community, in shop, factory, and office, and take their pleasure in the usual English ways?

What I feel intensely is, that the uplifting of a Judaic or Medieval ideal gives a protection to many a modern transgression upon which it has no fierce light to throw.

Religion concerns the community as well as the individual. Nine-tenths of the miseries of our race result directly or indirectly from disobedience to the laws of God. Man's curse, not God's, darkens earth. As students for the ministry, you are bound, therefore, to search for the methods by which a better and happier state of society can be established. You must not, you can not—if there be any faith in God in your souls, and any drop of human blood in your hearts—be content to feel the burden of the mystery—

> "the heavy and the weary weight
> Of all this unintelligible world,"

and not, with solemn earnestness, examine every conceivable method by which it may be lightened.

The science of Sciology (which, I am glad to know, you will be called upon to study) is but a branch of Theology, resting, as it does, upon the fact that there are God-ordained laws, discoverable by the human intellect, which have but to be obeyed

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* "Records of later Life," by Frances Anne Kemble. II. p. 93.

to enable all God's children to participate in the myriad blessings with which this fair earth is laden.

Here again I have one or two cautions to give.

The study of social theories is fascinating; but the practical work of purifying the waste places of our cities is laborious, difficult, and wearisome; and in carrying it out many things have to be endured which are "offensive to the taste, and to fine art a treason."

Beware lest the fascination of the study makes you too fastidious to put your hands to the rough tasks that are nearest to you. Believe me, it is impossible to over-rate the amount of preventible wretchedness that exists in every town within this land; and resolve that you, at least, will not buy any pleasant leisure at the price of its continuance.

The study of social theories again carries you into vast fields of thought—it brings before you the vision of a new earth into whose cities there shall in no wise enter anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie—but the practical tasks to which you will be called are necessarily small and comparatively insignificant.

Beware lest attachment to a great scheme for human regeneration should lessen your faithfulness in the discharge of lowly duties—lest because you would fain redeem a world, you should neglect a Sunday School or a Mission. Resolve that at least one small patch of ground shall blossom more abundantly because you have taken it under your charge.

Gentlemen, as I look upon you in the light of my knowledge of the kind of careers that, in all probability, await you, my heart is touched as by some pathetic tale of human toil, endurance, and patience.

Many of the men in the Colleges around you will have the world at their feet. The highest dignities in Church and State will be conferred upon them.

As for you—you may become as learned as the most learned,

and as devout as the most devout, and your place will be where only two or three are gathered together. You are not justified in expecting any abundance of earthly rewards or the gratification of any worldly ambition whatever—if you can get an honest living it will be well.

A woman of genius, who knew what it was to have grave and bitter sorrows brought upon those she loved by defiances of the world's opinions, had a certain school recommended to her for her son, on the ground that there he would learn to cherish independence of thought. "Oh, my God!" (was her reply) "let him be taught to think as other people do."

As the years pass, you will know, in all human probability better than you do now, how and why such a cry could spring from a stricken heart.

Yet, be of good courage. The proudest earthly success can give no blessedness equal to that possessed by the man who will receive nothing at the world's hands that he can not take with the approval of his conscience—and who knows clearly what is the right thing for him to do—does it, and thanks God when it is done.*

* "He knew the right thing, did it, and thanked God when 'twas done."—*Browning.*